

## Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

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S E C R E T USNATO 0191

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJ: MBFR: UK PAPER ON ALLIED REACTION TO

EASTERN FREEZE PROPOSAL

REF: STATE 7762

UK AT JANUARY 16 SPC MEETING DISTRIBUTED A PAPER ON THE WESTERN RESPONSE TO THE EASTERN FREEZE PROPOSAL. THIS PAPER PRESENTS SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME REASONING AS THE PAPER WHICH THE UK EMBASSY DELIVERED IN WASHINGTON ON JANUARY 10 (REFTEL). HOWEVER, THE UK PAPER DISTRIBUTED IN SPC CALLS FOR A COUNTER-PROPOSAL FOR A GROUND AND AIR MANPOWER FREEZE FROM THE MOMENT THAT A PHASE I AGREEMENT WAS "SIGNED", AND NOT FROM THE MOMENT THAT A PHASE I AGREEMENT WAS "REACHED", AS IN THE UK PAPER DELIVERED IN WASHINGTON. SPC DISCUSSION OF UK PAPER REPORTED SEPTTEL. TEXT OF UK PAPER FOLLOWS:

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BEGIN TEXT

1. IN THE UK VIEW, THE QUESTION OF HOW THE ALLIES SHOULD RESPOND TO THE

EASTERN FREEZE PROPOSAL IS THE MOST PRESSING PROBLEM FOR THE COMING ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS.

2. IN COMMON WITH SEVERAL OF OUR ALLIES, WE DO NOT BELIEVE A CATEGORICAL REJECTION IS FEASIBLE. IF ALLIED NEGOTIATORS WERE TO REJECT THE EASTERN PROPOSAL OUT OF HAND, THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE DISCOURAGED FROM CONTINUING TO PRESS IT IN NEGOTIATIONS TO THE EXCLUSION OF TOPICS MORE IMPORTANT TO THE ALLIES. THEY WOULD, MOREOVER, ALMOST CERTAINLY PUBLICIZE THEIR OFFER AND THE ALLIES' REJECTION OF IT AND MAKE THE MOST OF ITS UNDOUBTED PROPAGANDA ADVANTAGES. A FREEZE WOULD BE REGARDED BY MANY PEOPLE IN WESTERN EUROPE AS A LOGICAL PRELUDE TO REDUCTIONS.

3. WE CONTINUE TO THINK THAT THE MOST EFFECTIVE RESPONSE WOULD BE FOR ALLIED NEGOTIATORS TO PUT FORWARD A COUNTER-PROPOSAL. THIS SHOULD BE SO FRAMED AS TO ENABLE THE ALLIES TO RECOVER THE TACTICAL INITIATIVE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, AND TO HOLD THEIR OWN IF THE WARSAW PACT DECIDE TO MAKE THEIR OWN OFFER PUBLIC. IT SHOULD THEREFORE BE OF EQUAL SUBSTANCE TO THE EASTERN PROPOSAL, SHOULD SHOW UP THE LATTER'S DEFECTS, AND IN PARTICULAR SHOULD EXPLOIT THE WARSAW PACT'S VULNERABILITY ON THE QUESTION OF DATA.

4. DURING EARLIER DISCUSSION OF THIS ISSUE THE UK ADVOCATED A FORM OF WESTERN COUNTER-PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD HAVE ENTAILED A FREEZE ON MANPOWER PRIOR TO THE CONCLUSION OF NEGOTIATIONS ON PHASE I REDUCTIONS, BUT WHICH INCLUDED SUCH ESSENTIAL ALLIED REQUIREMENTS AS A CLEAR LIMIT ON DURATION AND AN EXCHANGE OF DATA. WHILE WE STILL SEE SUBSTANTIVE MERIT IN THIS COURSE, WE RECOGNIZE THAT ITS RESULT MIGHT BE TO SIDE-TRACK NEGOTIATIONS INTO DISCUSSION OF A PROPOSAL WHOSE PRINCIPAL EFFECT WOULD BE TO PERPETUATE EXISTING FORCE DISPARITIES. MOREOVER, THE WEST MIGHT FIND IT DIFFICULT FOR POLITICAL REASONS, WHATEVER THE AGREED LIMIT ON DURATION, TO END A FREEZE ONCE ENTERED INTO.

5. AFTER FURTHER CONSIDERATION, THEREFORE, THE UK AUTHORITIES  
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HAVE CONCLUDED THAT A BETTER COURSE MIGHT BE FOR THE ALLIES TO MAKE A COUNTER-PROPOSAL FOR A GROUND AND AIR FORCE MANPOWER FREEZE WHICH WOULD COME INTO EFFECT FROM THE MOMENT THAT A PHASE I AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED. THE ALLIES HAVE ALREADY OFFERED NO-INCREASE COMMITMENTS ON GROUND AND AIR FORCES RESPECTIVELY BETWEEN THE PHASES. IT COULD BE EMPHASIZED THAT THE ALLIANCE WAS READY TO BRING INTO EFFECT THE FREEZE NOW PROPOSED IMMEDIATELY ON SIGNATURE OF A PHASE I AGREEMENT, WITHOUT WAITING FOR RATIFICATION OR ENTRY INTO FORCE. THE PROPOSAL WOULD INCLUDE PROVISION FOR PRIOR AGREEMENT ON DATA. IN THE UK VIEW SUCH AN OFFER WOULD TURN THE IDEA OF A FREEZE TO ALLIED PURPOSES AND PROVIDE WESTERN PARTICIPANTS WITH A CLEAR AND DEFENSIBLE POSITION SHOULD THE WARSAW PACT DECIDE TO MAKE ITS PROPOSAL PUBLIC.

END TEXT.BRUCE

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